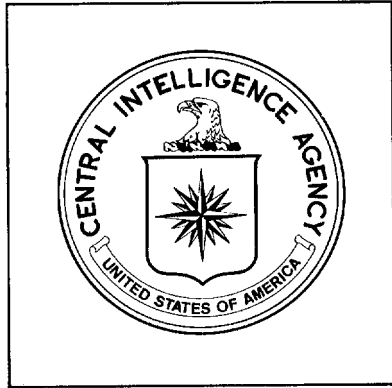


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This publication is prepared for regional specialists in the Washington community by the Middle East - Africa Division, Office of Current Intelligence, with occasional contributions from other offices within the Directorate of Intelligence. Comments and queries are welcome. They should be directed to the authors of the individual articles.

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Tanzania

Zanzibar Leader Strengthens His Hand Against Rivals

The President of the Afro-Shirazi Party has been strengthened by recent changes in the party constitution. Aboud Jumbe undercut his rivals by making it possible to expel them from the party for corruption and by downgrading the party and governmental element which they dominate--the Revolutionary Council (REVCO).

Jumbe managed to persuade the triennial ASP congress, which ended its sessions on 29 November, to amend the party constitution to make the party National Executive Committee the most important body in the party at the expense of the REVCO. The committee, a broadly based group which Jumbe believes he can manipulate, now selects the President and has the theoretical power to remove him if he loses the confidence of three-quarters of the committee. In another amendment a procedure is established by which corrupt officials may be expelled from the party--a particularly useful weapon against REVCO members, many of whom are blatantly corrupt.

In early November Jumbe engineered the appointment of his main REVCO rival, Colonel Seif Bakari, to a post in the union Tanzanian government as a junior minister. Bakari has a power base in the Zanzibar armed forces and the youth organization, and Jumbe evidently hopes that he will be enticed to spend most of his time on the mainland and weaken his position on the island--a tactic used by Jumbe's predecessor for the gradual removal of power of an earlier radical rival.

The 31-man REVCO consists primarily of former stevedores, taxi drivers and other uneducated persons who participated in the violent overthrow of the

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PLO-USSR

Arafat in Moscow: The Public Record

Last week's visit of a PLO delegation headed by Yasir Arafat to Moscow seemed to break little new ground

The communique marking the end of the visit indicates that Arafat gave little more than lip service to Moscow's initiative of November 9 to reconvene the Geneva conference. The Palestinians seem to be looking to the UN to generate momentum for their cause, but Moscow is cool to pursuing Middle East issues in a forum where its influence will be diluted.

The Soviets apparently again unsuccessfully pressed Arafat to make some move toward affirming Israel's right to exist. The communique did say that a Middle East settlement should be achieved on the basis of UN resolutions and the UN charter. Although the Soviets can take this as implicit acknowledgement of Israel's existence, the verbiage is sufficiently ambiguous to leave Arafat considerable room for maneuver.

Although the communique predictably knocked Sinai II and castigated "certain quarters" for undermining Arab unity, it did not criticize either Sadat or the US by name.

Arafat's reception in Moscow was similar to that he received during his previous visit last spring. He had no conversations with any official higher than Foreign Minister Gromyko and party secretary Ponomarev. Last spring, Arafat had a brief, ceremonial encounter with Brezhnev; this time he was accorded somewhat greater media coverage.

The Soviets continue to withhold formal endorsement of the PLO as the sole legitimate representative

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India

Cabinet Changes

The cabinet reshuffle in India on November 30 does not appear to have any connection with India's foreign affairs, including the current controversy with Bangladesh. The change does remove two important members of the government, Swaran Singh and Uma Shankar Dikshit. Additionally, two ministers of state with pro-Communist leanings were dropped and their replacements appear to hold centrist/conservative views. The embassy in New Delhi sees the latter action as a further indication of Prime Minister Gandhi's gradual reorientation of her government toward more centrist policies.

Singh had held many posts in the cabinet since 1952. Most recently he was minister of defense. Dikshit, 74, a long-time close adviser to Gandhi, was minister of shipping and transport and has now been named governor of the southeastern state of Andhra Pradesh. No new post has yet been announced for the 68-year old Singh, who reportedly irritated the prime minister last June when he expressed reservations regarding her decision to impose a state of emergency.

The two new cabinet members are Bansi Lal, formerly the tough-minded chief minister of Haryana state, and G.S. Dhillon, previously the speaker in the lower house of parliament. Both have been close to Gandhi, particularly in the months since the emergency was proclaimed. Dhillon, a Sikh like the outgoing Singh, takes over shipping and transport; Lal becomes minister without portfolio. Gandhi will, at least temporarily, take over the defense ministry in addition to her other duties, thus giving her more direct control over the military.

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